

AGENCY ARCHIVES AND RECORDS CENTER STUDY REPORT

PURPOSE

1. The purpose of the Agency Archives and Records Center study was to:¹
 - a. Find some way to improve Records Center operations.
 - b. Identify problems and reasons which have caused the Records Center to be full and to identify actions which may be taken to overcome them.
 - c. Determine whether the present method of reporting about Records Center operations is as revealing as it should be.
 - d. Develop a suitable formula for computing costs of Records Center storage.

STUDY BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

2. The Agency Archives and Records Center study was conducted at the request of the Chief, Records Administration Branch, by memorandum dated 19 February 1968. This memorandum established the study scope as "an in-depth survey of the operation and conditions in the Agency Archives and Records Center [redacted] "Every facet of this operation is to be examined ... the buildings, the personnel, the procedures, and the condition of the records stored, as well as the customer's feeling about the service received." "Also we must review our method or formula for costing Records Center storage -- is this a valid method -- are there alternative or better ways?" The study adhered to these requisites.

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ARCHIVES AND RECORDS CENTER BACKGROUND

3. HISTORY

The Agency Archives and Records Center dates from its origin on 29 March 1946 in the Central Intelligence Group. In September, 1948, the Center became the Administrative Records Section of the Office of Collection and Dissemination. On 21 December 1950 the Center was transferred to the office that became the Office of General Services of the Agency. In November, 1952, what had been known variously as the Central Records and Files Section, OCD - OCR; and the Records and File Section, Administrative Files Unit, and Archives Section, OGS; became the Records Center. In February, 1954, the Center became part of the Management Improvement Staff, Office of the Comptroller, where it remained until it was transferred to the Management Staff, DDS. The Center had been physically located in two local locations until the new building was

erected [] in 1955. On 24 April 1955 the Center was placed under the jurisdiction of [] where it remained until 24 March 1958. On this date jurisdiction of the center was transferred to the Records Management Staff, DDS. The Records Center was designated the Agency Archives and Records Center on 3 June 1963 and again placed under [] On 18 May 1967 the responsibility for the Center was transferred from the [] to the Support Services Staff, DDS, by order of the Deputy Director of Support.

4. FUNCTIONS

As the Center became more characteristic of a federal records center, it was organized functionally in line with federal records centers, with three (3) basic functions: accessioning; reference service; and records disposition. Federal Records Centers operate a centralized microfilming service,² not performed by the Agency Center. On the other hand, the Agency Archives and Records Center has assumed functions not found in Federal Records Centers.

The functions added to the Agency Archives and Records Center basic records center responsibilities are:

- a. Supplemental Distribution: This responsibility was assumed as early as 1 September 1949, but was formalized on 7 April 1952.³
- b. Storage of Map Library Collection: This responsibility was assumed by agreement on 10 October 1958.⁴
- c. Storage of Personal Papers: On 20 November 1958, the Center was assigned the function of storing "...classified and unclassified papers of a personal or quasi-personal nature which the employee will need to re-establish himself at Headquarters."⁵
- d. Servicing of Clandestine Services and Office of Communications Records: While this function can be viewed as a normal Center function, it should be noted that the Clandestine Services records were stored in a special area in the Center and were serviced by DDP/RID personnel. On 22 October 1959, these records were transferred to Center jurisdiction.⁶ The Office of Communications was involved because its records were housed with those of the Clandestine Services from historical precedent.

- e. Vital Records: As of 11 August 1960, responsibility for the storage, accessioning, and disposition of Agency vital records was transferred from the special vital records repository to the Agency Archives and Records Center. This action was taken after a series of discussions with Agency components, and approval of the Center as a vital records repository by the Office of Security.
- f. TOP SECRET Archives: In February, 1968, the Central Reference Service abolished its TOP SECRET Archives and the documents held by the Central Top Secret Control Office were transferred to the Agency Archives and Records Center for servicing.

5. ORGANIZATION

The Agency Archives and Records Center is organized functionally by the major areas of activity: (1) Accessioning; (2) Reference Service; (3) Disposition; (4) Archives; and (5) Suitland Annex. The servicing of vital records, and supplemental distribution are delegated as the activity in these areas coincide with the major functional areas, although the organization of the center places a prime responsibility for each function. All personnel are utilized as the work load dictates. The only exception is in the personnel assigned to the Suitland Annex who are involved only in supplemental distribution. When the move to Suitland is completed, main Center personnel will no longer be involved in servicing this activity, except for special handling documents which cannot be stored at Suitland because of security.

6. TABLE OF ORGANIZATION

A management study of the [redacted] noted that on 12 April 1955 there were [redacted] on the Center table of organization. A study of Center personnel needs in 1956 concluded that the Center T/O should be increased by two (2) records management analyst, and two (2) laborer positions, both requirements being based upon "... operating precedents established by the GSA Federal Records Centers as well as Army, Navy, and State Department Centers."⁸ When the Center assumed vital records responsibility in 1960 it also received three (3) positions from the vital records repository table of organization (one (1) VMR position was abolished). This brought the center position total to [redacted]. On 1 August 1963, two (2) courier positions were transferred to the Office of Logistics, and the Center T/O reverted to [redacted]. On 15 September [redacted] two (2) positions were added to provide [redacted]. This brought the present Center T/O to [redacted].

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PART 4 AGENCY RECORDS CENTERS

SECTION 401.00 ESTABLISHMENT

401.01 Authority. Section 506 (c) of the Federal Records Act of 1950 authorizes Federal agencies to maintain and operate records centers for the storage, processing, and servicing of records that are appropriate therefor, when such centers are approved by the Administrator of General Services. Such centers operated by Federal agencies are referred to herein as "agency records centers."

401.02 Existing Records Centers. Agency records centers in operation as of the date of this Regulation are provisionally approved, pending their inspection by the General Services Administration.

401.03 Requests for Authority to Establish or Relocate Records Centers. No agency records center shall be established or relocated from one city to another without the prior written approval of the General Services Administration.

a. **Exclusions.** For purposes of this section the term "agency records center" excludes:

1. Staging areas containing less than 5,000 square feet of space used by agencies for the temporary storage of materials preparatory to their transfer to a records center or other disposition; provided that no records are held in the staging area in excess of five years.
2. Areas of less than 5,000 square feet used solely for the storage of records to which occasional reference is made but on which no processing activity (screening, microfilming, etc.) is performed.

b. **Content of Requests.** Requests for authority to establish or relocate an agency records center shall be submitted in writing to the Administrator of General Services. Such requests shall specify:

1. Proposed location of the agency records center
2. Space to be occupied in gross square feet
3. Nature and quantity of records to be stored
4. Total personnel to be employed
5. Justification of the proposed center

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- c. Approval of Requests. Requests for the establishment or relocation of an agency records center will be approved by the Administrator of General Services when greater economy or efficiency can be achieved through its operation than by use of a Federal Records Center operated by the General Services Administration.

401.04 Annual Agency Records Center Report. Each Federal agency operating one or more agency records centers shall submit to the National Archives and Records Service, within 60 days after the close of each fiscal year, a report on Standard Form 137 (Exhibit 4, Appendix A), for each center.